

WillowMEDIA™ Overview and Components

WillowMEDIA lets you control PC multimedia the way you use a stack of home stereo components. You decide which components to use.

Click on this Help file picture for a summary of the components.

(Not all WillowMEDIA versions contain all components. Check the Willow Pond web site at www.willowpond.com for available upgrades.)



Multimedia Players

Players support many types of multimedia. Players have familiar Play, Stop, and related buttons.

To add a player, click the [Add Component button](#).

Player appearance varies with multimedia type and source.



Volume Mixer

Sets audio volume levels, and lets you select recording input source(s)



Media Clock™

Shows the time and plays multimedia alarms



Common Controls Bar

Controls applying to all components



Showing or Hiding Willow*MEDIA* Components

To add a component, click the [Add Component button](#). To close it, click its [Close button](#).

Keyboard Navigation

You can control Willow*MEDIA* with your keyboard or mouse.

To move the keyboard focus, press [Tab] or [Shift]-[Tab]. To "click" buttons under the focus, press the space bar. To move sliders under the focus, use the arrow keys.

Common Controls

Click on this Help file picture for information on the common controls.



System Menu button

Shows Willow*MEDIA* menus



Help

Shows this document



About Willow Pond



Configuration Options

Global WillowMEDIA options



Add Component

Adds (runs) a component of your choice



Play All

Presses all WillowMEDIA player [Play/Pause buttons](#) together



Media Clock™ Overview and Controls

Media Clock lets you schedule alarm events, each of which can play multimedia or perform other actions.

In the Help file, click on the picture below for more information.



Time Display

Shows the time



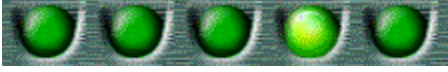
Media Clock Options

Configuration options



Alarm Buttons

Click to view or configure alarms



Close

Closes the component



Setting Alarms

To set an alarm:

1. Click an [alarm button](#) or the Media Clock's [Options button](#) to show the alarm configuration screen.
2. Select the tab for the alarm you want to set. Each alarm button has its own configuration tab, and is set separately.
3. Turn the alarm On or Off.
4. Select whether you want Media Clock to announce the time or play a file for the alarm.
5. If you are using a file as the alarm, enter or browse to the file to be played. You can play it now by clicking Test.
6. Specify when the alarm should play. Choose the type of alarm interval (daily, weekly, etc.), and enter additional information in the fields shown for that type of interval.
7. Click OK when done. Buttons for alarms you have configured will appear illuminated on the Media Clock front panel.

To turn off a playing alarm, just click on its alarm button. Then click Cancel.

WillowMEDIA Player Overview and Controls

WillowMEDIA plays many types of multimedia. You can have on-screen as many player components as will fit, and each player can open and play any of the supported types of multimedia. Each player adjusts its controls for what is loaded or playing, so its appearance will vary.

To load or open multimedia for playing, click a player's [Open button](#).

To add a player, click the [Add Component button](#).

In the Help file, click on the picture below for more information.



Playing AVI video (appearance varies with media type and source)

(Not all WillowMEDIA versions contain all components. Check the Willow Pond web site at www.willowpond.com for available upgrades and for a list of supported multimedia types.)

Close

Closes the component



Open

Loads multimedia from disk files, CD, the Internet, or other sources



Current Collection

The current collection of multimedia, such as a CD or playlist

Video Clip

Current Selection

The current selection, such as an individual file or CD track

Snowbord.avi

Eject

Opens or closes the CD drive tray



Skip

Moves to the previous or next [selection](#)



Play/Pause

Toggles between playing and pausing



Stop

Stops playing



Rewind / Fast Forward

Clicking moves one second in the [selection](#). Holding a button down changes position by several seconds



Random

Causes [collections](#) to play in random order



Repeat

Causes playing to repeat until stopped manually



Save As

Saves your recording in a file



Record

Records from the current [input device\(s\)](#), if supported



Edit Playlist

Lets you define multimedia [collections](#) to play in sequence



Edit

Launches editor programs, if available



(Check the Willow Pond web site at www.willowpond.com for available upgrades, including multimedia editors.)

Player Options

Configuration options



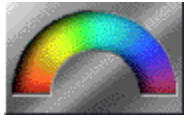
Media Source

The source of the current multimedia, for example:

PC hard drive



CD disk



Internet or Broadcast Media



Microphone or Line input



View Mode button

When playing video, displays or hides a floating display window



Progress Slider

Shows the current play position. Drag this slider to change position.



Counter

When playing or paused, this shows time elapsed. When not playing or paused it shows total duration.

When playing or paused, the counter display also shows the number of the [current selection](#), for example in a playlist or CD. When not playing or paused, it shows the total number of selections in the [current collection](#).



Media Type Display or Control

This location can contain player controls and animations for the multimedia type:

Video/Image Window:



Audio Graphic Equalizer:

[Sliders to alter audio bass, treble, etc.](#) Appears automatically for those audio types supported.



Digital Audio:

Indicates digital audio not supported by the graphic equalizer. Offers no controls.



CD Media:

Indicates a CD. Offers no controls.



MIDI Animation:

Indicates MIDI music. Offers no controls.



Selecting and Playing Multimedia

To load and play multimedia:

1. Click a player's [Open button](#).
2. Select the *type* of multimedia:
 - *To play multimedia from CD*, choose that option, select the CD volume if you have more than one CD drive, and click OK.
 - *To play a file* (or streaming multimedia from the Internet), select that option and then enter or browse to the item to play. Click OK.
3. Willow*MEDIA* automatically adjusts its on-screen controls.
4. Use the [Play/Pause](#), [Stop](#), [Repeat](#), [Random](#), etc. buttons to control playing.

Creating Playlists

You can create playlist collections of many types of multimedia:

1. Click a player's [Edit Playlist button](#).
2. What to do next differs by multimedia type:
 - *For CDs:*
 - a) Enter a playlist ([collection](#)) title, and artist name.
 - b) Willow**MEDIA** detects and lists the CD tracks in the left side window. For each track ([selection](#)) you can enter a name by selecting the track in the left-side window, entering a name for that track at the bottom of the screen, and clicking the Set Name button.
 - c) To add a track to your playlist, select it in the left-side window and click Add. To exclude a track from your playlist, select it in the right-side window and click Delete.
 - d) When finished editing the playlist, click OK.
 - e) Your playlist is automatically saved. When you insert this CD in the future, Willow**MEDIA** will recognize it and use your playlist when playing it.
 - *For files or Internet media sources:*
 - a) Enter a playlist ([collection](#)) title.
 - b) For each item to add to your playlist, click the Add button and locate the item.
 - c) To delete an item, highlight it and click Delete.
 - d) When finished, click Save As to store the playlist in a file which you can load later using the [Open button](#).

Setting Willow*MEDIA* for CD AutoPlay

Under the Player component [Options button](#), you can choose to make Willow*MEDIA* the Windows CD AutoPlay program. When you insert an audio CD, Windows launches the AutoPlay program to play the CD.

Using the HOTZ MIDI Player

(Not available in all versions of Willow*MEDIA*; refer to <http://www.willowpond.com> for available upgrades.)

When Willow*MEDIA* detects a MIDI file which incorporates special "HOTZ" extensions, it lets you play along with the song. The notes you play will automatically be altered to fit the music being played, so even if you have no musical experience you will sound great playing along.

You can play along on your PC keyboard, using the five rows that start with the keys [F1], [1], [Q], [A], and [Z]. Each row corresponds to a different instrument in the song, and pressing a key in a row plays a note for that instrument. Keys on the left are lower in tone than the keys on the right.

For more information on HOTZ MIDI files and applications, check the Willow Pond web site at www.willowpond.com.

Using the Graphic Equalizer

When playing some digital audio, Willow*MEDIA* displays graphic equalizer sliders. You can use these sliders to adjust the frequency characteristics of the audio (bass, treble, e.g.).



To increase bass, raise the sliders on the left. To increase treble, raise the sliders on the right. To return a slider to its centered position, select it and press the space bar.

Note: If the equalizer doesn't automatically appear, then it does not support the type of audio being used. For up-to-date information on supported audio formats, refer to the support section of <http://www.willowpond.com>.

Recording Multimedia

To record multimedia:

1. If a multimedia player with its [Record button](#) isn't showing, add a player using the [Add Component button](#).
2. Select the input source from which to record:
 - For audio, such as a microphone or CD, use the Willow*MEDIA* [Mixer component](#) to select the input source. (Note that the mixer component displays the controls that your sound card driver tells it to, so please refer any questions on individual mixer controls to your sound card maker.)
3. Start playing the multimedia from the selected source, and click the Willow*MEDIA* player's Record button.

Note: Options including recording formats may be available under the player's [Options button](#).

Mixer Overview and Controls

The Mixer shows your sound card's volume controls. *Controls differ among sound cards.* The Mixer component's height automatically adjusts to display the controls, but you can choose whether or not to show a control.

In the Help file, click on the picture below for more information.



Mixer Options

Configuration options



Show Presets

Shows or hides the mixer [Preset buttons](#)



Mixer Line

Lets you choose the group of mixer controls to display (the group of Output versus Input controls, e.g.)



Mixer Control Types

Mixer controls are determined entirely by your audio hardware and its drivers, not by WillowMEDIA. WillowMEDIA asks the drivers what controls to display, what to call them, and how they should behave. So if you have questions about individual mixer controls, please refer them to your audio hardware supplier.

For most inputs and outputs, a vertical slider controls loudness, a horizontal slider sets the left/right speaker balance, and a [button mutes](#) input or output. With Tool Tips enabled (under the global [WillowMEDIA Options button](#)), holding the cursor over a control shows its name.

You can also use keyboard “hotkeys” to control volume, as defined using the Hotkeys tab under the [Mixer Options](#) button.

Common examples of sound card mixer controls include:

- **Master:** Sometimes called Volume. The master control for all output signals. The level of any signal is affected by both the Master control and the control for the individual signal. To affect *all* signals, use the Master control. To change an *individual* signal, move *its* controls.
- **Wave:** Controls digital audio output (such as wave files), often also including audio for video files, video disks, and Internet multimedia
- **CD:** Controls CD levels, for CD drives set to play through the sound card
- **Synth:** Sometimes called FM or MIDI. Controls MIDI music synthesis output.
- **WaveTable:** Sometimes called WT or MIDI. Another form of MIDI music, which sounds better than Synth (FM) and uses different drivers. Note that some wavetable products use the Wave output control instead of a separate WaveTable control.
- **Line:** Controls the hardware's Line In or Line Out levels
- **Mic:** Controls the microphone level
- **Aux:** Meaning varies greatly, depending on the sound card. Might control anything from CD to Line to special effects.
- **Mix:** Sometimes called Loop. If available, this affects the levels of all input types enabled (as Master does for output signals). For example, you might enable both CD and microphone to record singing along with an audio CD, and use this to control the combined input signal.
- **3D, FX, Echo, Flange, Spatial, etc.:** Controls for special audio effects (varies greatly among sound cards).

Mute Buttons

Toggle between muting and enabling the signal. A lit LED indicates enabled, while one with its LED not lit is muted.



Preset Buttons and Display

Double-click a button to store current mixer settings under the button. Single-click a button to recall mixer settings previously saved there. The display shows the name you've entered for the settings.



Deciding Which Mixer Controls to Display

Willow*MEDIA* lets you hide selected mixer controls from display:

1. Click the [Mixer Options button](#) on the Mixer.
2. If you have more than one audio mixer device in your PC, select the Mixer Device for which you want to display controls.
3. In the Mixer Line list, select the group of controls you want to display (output volume versus recording input controls, for example).
4. Click to enable or disable display of each control.

WillowMEDIA Error Messages and Troubleshooting

It is useful to think of WillowMEDIA as a program that sits on top of your multimedia hardware and its drivers. When you want to play something, WillowMEDIA passes the request to your PC. It is your PC and its drivers that do the actual playing. With that in mind it is easier to understand the Error Messages and Troubleshooting sections below:

Error Messages

Almost all error messages you see when using WillowMEDIA are actually provided by the multimedia drivers in your system, not by WillowMEDIA. When a driver is unable to do something you request, it responds with error message text which WillowMEDIA passes to you.

This means the text of most error messages, and even the language in which they are written, are beyond the control of WillowMEDIA. For information on driver error messages please contact the supplier of the hardware being used.

Troubleshooting

If you have trouble playing something, the most important thing to understand is whether the problem is with your system configuration or solely with WillowMEDIA. The best way to do this is:

1. Close WillowMEDIA
2. Use the Media Player accessory that comes with Windows (or another media-specific application for media types not supported by Media Player) to try to play the same multimedia

If you get a similar failure using other players, then the problem is with your multimedia PC configuration (hardware conflicts, incorrect driver versions, for example), not WillowMEDIA. Contact your hardware supplier for help configuring your system to play the multimedia you want.

Only if the problem is observed solely when using WillowMEDIA is it likely a WillowMEDIA problem. If so, check the Willow Pond web site at www.willowpond.com. We maintain a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document for WillowMEDIA with answers to common questions. We may also post patches (updates) to the product there.

Acknowledgements

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